

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Application No.: 10/591,122

Attorney Docket No.: Q81160

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. to 22 (canceled).

23. (currently amended): A sliding member composition produced by kneading a matrix synthetic resin and a vapor grown carbon fiber, wherein the composition contains the vapor grown carbon fiber in an amount of 10 mass% to 70 mass%, and wherein the vapor grown carbon fiber has a fiber diameter of 50 to 200 nm, an aspect ratio of 40 to 1,000, and a peak intensity ratio ($I_0 = I_{1360}/I_{1580}$) of 0.1 to 1, wherein I_{1580} represents a peak height at $1,580\text{ cm}^{-1}$ and I_{1360} represents a peak height at $1,360\text{ cm}^{-1}$ in a Raman scattering spectrum, and the composition exhibits a heat deflection temperature of 160°C or higher under heavy load, as determined in accordance with ASTM D 648.

24. (canceled).

25. (original): The sliding member composition as claimed in claim 23, which exhibits a thermal conductivity of 1 W/mK or higher.

26. (original): The sliding member composition as claimed in claim 23, which exhibits a flexural modulus of $4,000\text{ MPa}$ or more.

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27. (original): A method for producing a sliding member composition characterized by comprising kneading a thermoplastic resin and a vapor grown carbon fiber having a fiber diameter of 50 to 200 nm, an aspect ratio of 40 to 1,000, a bulk density of 0.01 to 0.1, and a peak intensity ratio ($I_0 = I_{1360}/I_{1580}$) of 0.1 to 1, wherein I_{1580} represents a peak height at $1,580\text{ cm}^{-1}$ and I_{1360} represents a peak height at $1,360\text{ cm}^{-1}$ in a Raman scattering spectrum, wherein the kneading is performed without applying strong shear force so as to suppress breakage rate of the carbon fiber to 20% or less.

28. (original): The method for producing a sliding member composition as claimed in claim 27, wherein the vapor grown carbon fiber is incorporated into a composite material composition in an amount of 10 mass% to 70 mass% during kneading of the thermoplastic resin and the vapor grown carbon fiber.

29. (original): The method for producing a sliding member composition as claimed in claim 27, wherein the thermoplastic resin and the vapor grown carbon fiber are kneaded while breakage rate of the carbon fiber is suppressed to 20% or less, by melt-kneading using a pressure kneader and subsequent pelletizing using a single-screw extruder or a reciprocating-single-screw extruder.

30. (original): The method for producing a molded sliding member, characterized by comprising molding a sliding member composition produced by the method for producing a sliding member composition as claimed in claim 27, at a mold temperature 20°C to 40°C higher than such an injection molding temperature that the time required for cooling the mold is five seconds and a non-defective production rate of 95% or higher is attained.

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31. (original): A sliding synthetic-resin molded article, which employs a resin composition produced by the method for producing a sliding member composition as claimed in claim 27.

32. (original): A non-lubricant sliding member, which employs a resin composition produced by the method for producing a sliding member composition as claimed in claim 27.